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NEWS RELEASE

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON STUDENTS TURN TABLES ON CHARITY, FIX UP HOUSE FOR HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

DAYTON, Ohio — In the world of charitable outreach, Habitat for Humanity leads the way in providing decent, affordable housing to families in need.

But four University of Dayton students are turning the tables on the organization to make Habitat the recipients of recent efforts to create decent housing.

The students, all entrepreneurship majors in Bob Chelle's sophomore experience class, have wrapped up three months of work to renovate a house they purchased at 105 Park Drive in the South Park neighborhood. The house is now on the market, and the students will donate proceeds from the sale of the house to Dayton Habitat for Humanity.

In the entrepreneurship class, students start and manage microcompanies and donate whatever funds they raise from their businesses to local nonprofit organizations. Chelle, director of UD's L. William Crotty Center for Enterprise Leadership, suggested the home-remodeling project to his students this year as a way of taking fund-raising to a greater level than T-shirt and candy sales.

"I wanted to try something new that would be a benefit to the community and of value to the student life experience," Chelle said, although the project required asking the University to extend 10 times the average \$3,000 start-up loan usually given to student entrepreneurs. But the University committed to the project and, with \$30,000 in hand, sophomores Julia Erbacher, David Lunne, Hayley Meyer and Matthew Shaw bought the 112-year-old house and set to work. They subcontracted with professionals for a new furnace and plumbing and did much of the remaining renovation work themselves.

"We did all the painting; sanded all the woodwork; tore down walls and installed new drywall; helped lay a new floor; removed, painted and replaced the kitchen cabinets and cleaned out the trash and debris," Erbacher said.

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The students admitted the project was far more difficult than they'd anticipated in demands on their time and efforts. Unexpected challenges added an extra strain. But the young entrepreneurs also feel good about the work they've done, knowing their labor will benefit families in need.

"This was a really good experience, especially because everything didn't go as we'd expected," Meyer said. "We learned how to handle the problems, and that will help us deal with problems later on in life as well."

The house is currently listed at \$54,900 by Coldwell Banker. Real Estate agent Jenny Knott said there's already been some interest in the house and, with the advent of spring and summer buying season, believes the house has a good chance of selling. "There's usually a fair amount of interest in that neighborhood," she added.

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